

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
**INFORMATION REPORT**

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COUNTRY Germany (Soviet Zone)

SUBJECT Ulbricht's Position Endangered by Semenov  
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1. There has been a good deal of pressure, especially since 17 Jun 53, to eliminate Ulbricht from the leadership of the SED. Much of this pressure originates in Red Army circles. It is an open secret in Soviet Germany that Ulbricht is in disfavor with V. Semenov, and that the Soviet officers' corps holds him personally responsible for most of the political shortcomings and failures of the Government (Soviet Zone). Ulbricht was on his way out as head of the party when he was saved by the uprising of 17 Jun, after which his removal would have been too dangerous. The 17 Jun demonstrations began with the staged protest of the building workers, which was intended to facilitate Ulbricht's removal. But the demonstration got out of hand because of the unexpected spontaneous support given to the controlled demonstration by the people. After that, Malenkov could not help keeping Ulbricht in his key position, but Ulbricht had to act much more carefully than heretofore, and to constantly give proofs of his intention to be just one member of a collegial directorate. Grotewohl's position, on the other hand, became very solid after the 17 Jun events, precisely because of Ulbricht's continuing difficulties.
2. In this uneasy situation, Pavel Yudin played the role of moderator, and of controller of the correct application of the new party line in Soviet Germany. Yudin is one of the top Communist theoreticians. He and M. A. Suslov are the two men belonging to the younger generation who act in this field as top assistants to Malenkov, who is not an expert in Communist theory. Yudin's presence in Berlin, despite his personal frictions with Ulbricht, meant nevertheless authoritative support for the latter in dealing with his own cadres, and assured for him through Yudin communication with Malenkov's Secretariat. There are now, however, some indications that Ulbricht's removal is again being considered, in case the four power conference opens new avenues toward West Germany. Semenov, supported in

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Moscow by influential circles in the party, is convinced that Ulbricht's removal would facilitate a new approach to potential sympathizers in West Germany. But he must proceed cautiously. Ulbricht has built himself up as the symbol of the DDR, therefore his removal demands a delicate operation. If carried out clumsily, it could impair the relative stability reached in East Germany during the last few months.

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